

KENTUCKY.

III.

THE LIBRARY OF COLONEL DURRETT.

A RICH COLLECTION RELATING TO KENTUCKY AND VIRGINIA—LETTERS OF DANIEL BOONE. GENERAL CLARK, THOMAS JEFFERSON, COLONEL DAVIES AND GENERAL BURGOYNE—SPELLING OF THE PIONEERS.

FROM STAFF CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.

Louisville, Feb. 21.—Kentucky is full of relics and reminiscences. Every old family has its collection of portraits, table silvers and china, and traditions abound of mighty hunters, Indian fighters, lawyers and Governors. At Lexington Henry Clay's grandchildren religiously preserve the watch-seals, gold snuff-boxes, Dresden inkstands, chased daggers and illuminated parchments that came to him as tribute from our forefathers. They can show you his portrait by Sully, painted from life, his tall Dutch clock, still the best time piece in Kentucky, queer old Flemish pictures that brought back from Ghent, where he went to negotiate the treaty of 1815, dinner-services bearing his monogram in gold, and old Colonial armchairs that he sat in to meditate his speeches. White-headed grandmothers discourse vivaciously of the fascination of his mild blue eye, the music of his voice and the panther-like grace of his movements; and men are still vigorous who used to run to the windows to look out when his four-horse coach came dashing along the old turnpike from Washington on its way to his beautiful country-seat at Ashland. Boone's rifles are almost as numerous as George Washington's shot-buckles, and mementos of Harrod, Kenton and Clark are widely dispersed. But the archaeological headquarters of Kentucky are at the private library of Colonel Reuben T. Durrett, in Louisville, which is one of the best and largest in the world.

Colonel Durrett is tall, white-bearded and blue-eyed, with the head of Longfellow and the manners of Sir Roger de Coverley. Nearly everybody in Louisville knows him, and everybody who knows him loves him. His collections are housed in his fine, roomy old mansion, built to accommodate a retinue of slaves, and set in a green lawn on a sunny street-corner, where magnolias bloom and grapevines flourish like weeds. The wide halls and lofty chambers are crammed with rare books and curiosities. Like Mr. Gladstone, the Colonel lives among his treasures, but, unlike him, he shares them with others. Surely no man ever used property more unselfishly.

"My collection belongs to the public," he says, simply, and the public takes him at his word. Every lawyer who wants to look up a client's genealogy, every school-teacher with a historical kindergarten, every orator at a loss for similes and every writer in search of facts thinks himself at liberty to rummage among these cabinets and shelves, and the black footman is busy day and night answering the bell to a stream of gaping sightseers. Historians are forced to come here to consult unique authorities. Theodore Roosevelt spent many days in the library with note-book and pencil, gathering "points" for his "Winning

Daniel Went Down With Sum goods in order to Take in ginseng at Lin Stone. I hope you will Wright me By the Best of Mr. Wright, Com. on the 1st of April New Year. He was Indian name King. Sept. 1st New Linstone and stole a number of horses—Indeed I saw one of the men who was killed on the hills above Limestone Creek on this River. I have seen some Indians from the Limestone saw a later returner from Mudington to Mr. Gumpsey at the old fort that 700 Indians are certainly still from Detroit To Way Lay the River at Different places to Take Notes sum say 700 Sum say 100 But the Later Currents of the Indians are now very few indeed. I am now about 7000 miles away from home. I may be dead or alive. Dear Sir with Kind regards to your noble Servant DANIEL BOONE.

My last comin. To Mrs. Hunt Col Rochester and Lady.

The copy of a loan office certificate he verifies thus:

This was copied by the Clark and is awl Wright DANIEL BOONE.

A unique curiosity, showing the scarcity of paper in the backwoods, is a slip bearing on the face a note signed by the old hunter, and on the back one signed by his brother.

Next to Boone, the popular imagination glorifies General George Rogers Clark. In the Durrett collection are Clark's compass and sundial, still true; his curious old French repeater, turpentine-shaped, in a case of fretted silver, that still keeps time and bravely tickles out the hour, though in a graveyard voice; many of his private accounts, for inventories, his will, the roster of his regiments and certain interesting documents, one of which is a copy:

George Rogers Clark, Major-General in the Armies of France and Commander-in-Chief of the French Revolutionary Legion of the Mississippi. To John Cochran.

Know you that by the special confidence reposed in your courage, ability, good conduct and fidelity, and

looking thing, unfit for a Gentleman to eat, I would think?

General Washington, President John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, then Vice-President, to all of whom he was presented, he draws these not flattering portraits:

"I was soon presented to the President. He is an agreeable gentleman, rather silent—very aged—and moderate statue, heavy set—with a large nose, and a studious, industry and laborious, as far as his powers go, of observation and fine imagination. I think better of him than most of my countrymen. I speak the French well, and am a great physiologist. I am a skillful physician for six months, and then will no more question the existence of it as a science than you will question your own existence."

I was sorry my physiological judge made me pronounce Genl. Washington to be naturally a man of moderate talents, very parsimonious and modest.

"I told him you were a statesman of transcendent deliberation."

"I told him you were a statesman of six months, and then will no more question the existence of it as a science than you will question your own existence."

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